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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Docket No.: ED-2012-ICCD-0050]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and approval; Comment Request; 2013-2014 Federal Student Aid Application

AGENCY: Department of Education (ED), Federal Student Aid (FSA)

ACTION: Notice

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 3501 *et seq.*), ED is proposing a revision of an existing information collection.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before [insert the 30th day after publication of this notice].

ADDRESSES: Comments submitted in response to this notice should be submitted electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> by selecting Docket ID number **ED-2012-ICCD-0050** or via postal mail, commercial delivery, or hand delivery. *Please note that comments submitted by fax or e-mail and those submitted after the comment period will not be accepted.* Written requests for information or comments submitted by postal mail or delivery should be addressed to the Director of the Information Collection Clearance Division, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, LBJ, Room 2E117, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Electronically mail ICDocketMgr@ed.gov. **Please do not send comments here.**

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department of Education (ED), in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps the Department assess the impact of its information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand the Department's information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format. ED is soliciting comments on the proposed information collection request (ICR) that is described below. The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology. Please note that written comments received in response to this notice will be considered public records.

Title of Collection: 2013-2014 Federal Student Aid Application

OMB Control Number: 1845-0001

Type of Review: Revision of an existing information collection

Respondents / Affected Public: Individuals or households

Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses: 46,099,008

Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours: 25,959,853

Abstract: Section 483 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), mandates that the Secretary of Education "...shall produce, distribute, and process free of charge common financial reporting forms as described in this subsection to be used for application and reapplication to determine the need and eligibility of a student for financial assistance..."

The determination of need and eligibility are for the following Title IV, HEA, federal student financial assistance programs: the Federal Pell Grant Program; the Campus-Based programs (Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study (FWS), and the Federal Perkins Loan Program); the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program; the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant; and the Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant.

Federal Student Aid, an office of the U.S. Department of Education (hereafter "the Department"), subsequently developed an application process to collect and process the data necessary to determine a student's eligibility to receive Title IV, HEA program assistance. The application process involves an applicant's submission of the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA). After submission of the FAFSA, an applicant receives a *Student Aid Report* (SAR), which is a summary of the data they submitted on the FAFSA. The applicant reviews the SAR, and, if necessary, will make corrections or updates to their submitted FAFSA.

The Department seeks OMB approval of all application components as a single "collection of information". The aggregate burden will be accounted for under OMB Control Number 1845-0001. The specific application components, descriptions and submission methods for each are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Federal Student Aid Application Components

Component	Description	Submission Method
Initial Submission of FAFSA		
FAFSA on the Web (FOTW)	Online FAFSA that offers applicants a customized experience.	Submitted by the applicant via www.fafsa.gov .
FOTW – Renewal	Online FAFSA for applicants who have previously completed the FAFSA.	
FOTW – EZ	Online FAFSA for applicants who qualify for the Simplified	

	Needs Test (SNT) or Automatic Zero (Auto Zero) needs analysis formulas.	
FOTW – EZ Renewal	Online FAFSA for applicants who have previously completed the FAFSA and who qualify for the SNT or Auto Zero needs analysis formulas.	
FAFSA on the Phone (FOTP)	The Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) representatives assist applicants by filing the FAFSA on their behalf through FOTW.	Submitted through www.fafsa.gov for applicants who call 1-800-4-FED-AID.
FOTP - EZ	FSAIC representatives assist applicants who qualify for the SNT or Auto Zero needs analysis formulas by filing the FAFSA on their behalf through FOTW.	
FAA Access	Online tool that a financial aid administrator (FAA) utilizes to submit a FAFSA.	Submitted through www.faaaccess.ed.gov by a FAA on behalf of an applicant.
FAA Access – Renewal	Online tool that a FAA can utilize to submit a Renewal FAFSA.	
FAA Access – EZ	Online tool that a FAA can utilize to submit a FAFSA for applicants who qualify for the SNT or Auto Zero needs analysis formulas.	
FAA Access - EZ Renewal	Online tool that a FAA can utilize to submit a FAFSA for applicants who have previously completed the FAFSA and who qualify for the SNT or Auto Zero needs analysis formulas.	
Electronic Other	This is a submission done by a FAA, on behalf of the applicant, using the Electronic Data Exchange (EDE).	The FAA may be using their mainframe computer or software to facilitate the EDE process.
PDF FAFSA or Paper FAFSA	The paper version of the FAFSA printed by the Department for applicants who are unable to access the Internet or the online PDF FAFSA for applicants who can access the Internet but are unable to complete the form using FOTW.	Mailed by the applicant.
Correcting Submitted FAFSA Information and Reviewing FAFSA Information		
FOTW – Corrections	Any applicant who has a Federal Student Aid PIN (FSA PIN) – regardless of how they originally applied – may make corrections using FOTW Corrections.	Submitted by the applicant via www.fafsa.gov .
Electronic Other – Corrections	With the applicant's permission, corrections can be made by a FAA using the EDE.	The FAA may be using their mainframe computer or software to facilitate the EDE process.
Paper SAR - This is a SAR and an option for corrections.	The full paper summary that is mailed to paper applicants who did not provide an e-mail address and to applicants whose records were rejected due to critical errors during processing. Applicants can write corrections directly on the paper SAR and mail for processing.	Mailed by the applicant.
FAA Access – Corrections	An institution can use FAA Access to correct the FAFSA.	Submitted through www.faaaccess.ed.gov by a FAA on behalf of an

		applicant.
Internal Department Corrections	The Department will submit an applicant's record for system-generated corrections.	There is no burden to the applicants under this correction type as these are system-based corrections.
FSAIC Corrections	Any applicant, with their Data Release Number (DRN), can change the postsecondary institutions listed on their FAFSA or change their address by calling FSAIC.	These changes are made directly in the CPS system by a FSAIC representative.
SAR Electronic (eSAR)	The eSAR is an online version of the SAR that is available on FOTW to all applicants with a PIN. Notifications for the eSAR are sent to students who applied electronically or by paper and provided an e-mail address. These notifications are sent by e-mail and include a secure hyperlink that takes the user to the FOTW site.	Cannot be submitted for processing.
SAR Acknowledgment	This is the condensed paper SAR that is mailed to applicants who applied electronically but did not provide an e-mail address and do not meet the criteria for a full paper SAR.	

This information collection also documents an estimate of the annual public burden as it relates to the application process for federal student aid. The Applicant Burden Model (ABM), measures applicant burden through an assessment of the activities each applicant conducts in conjunction with other applicant characteristics and in terms of burden, the average applicant's experience. Key determinants of the ABM include:

- The total number of applicants that will potentially apply for federal student aid;
- How the applicant chooses to complete and submit the FAFSA (e.g., by paper or electronically via FOTW);
- How the applicant chooses to submit any corrections and/or updates (e.g., the paper SAR or electronically via FOTW Corrections);
- The type of SAR document the applicant receives (eSAR, SAR acknowledgment, or paper SAR);
- The formula applied to determine the applicant's expected family contribution (EFC) (full need analysis formula, Simplified Needs Test or Automatic Zero); and
- The average amount of time involved in preparing to complete the application.

The ABM is largely driven by the number of potential applicants for the application cycle. The total application projection for 2013-2014 is based upon two factors - estimates of the total enrollment in all degree-granting institutions and the percentage change in FAFSA submissions for the last completed or almost completed application cycle. The ABM is also based on the application options available to students and parents. The Department accounts for each application component based on web trending tools, survey information, and other Department data sources.

For 2013-2014, the Department is reporting a net burden reduction of 3,398,000 hours. The reduction is a reflection of the effects of simplifying FAFSA on the Web, which is utilized by the majority of applicants who apply for aid.

Simplification of the application is demonstrated by 1) the average completion times for initial submissions and; 2) fewer corrections being made to the application.

The projected average completion times for initial submissions has decreased by 11 minutes for 2013-14. In data reported in the 2012-2013 supporting statement, first-time filers using FOTW would take approximately 1.30 hours (78 minutes) to submit an application. The data from 2011-12 indicate that the same user would be able to submit their application in 1.12 hours (67 minutes), reducing their burden by .18 hours (11 minutes).

Corrections are also projected to decrease by 760,696 responses for 2013-14. Fewer corrections mean that more comprehensive and accurate data was captured in the initial submission of the application.

Updated completion times were calculated for each component and have been used to estimate the burden, excluding the change in the applicant volume. The results demonstrate that the burden for all applicants would have decreased by almost 13 percent or 3,758,702 hours, if the application volume had remained constant.

If the Department had not simplified the application process, thus reducing the time required to complete the FAFSA, the new burden estimates would only need to account for the change in applicants. The 1.43% increase in applicants would result in an increase in burden of 347,945 hours.

Accounting for both the increase in total applicants and the decrease in individual applicant burden, the net change is an overall decrease of almost 12 percent or 3,398,000 hours. The following Table shows the net burden change and total cost for applicants. The change in total annual responses is also listed in the Table. Total annual responses include the original FAFSA submission and corrections.

Table 2. Net Burden Change

	2012-2013	2013-2014	Change	% Change	Burden Disposition
		Accounting for change in applicant burden and change in applicants.			
Total Applicants	24,705,864	25,053,809	+347,945	+1.41%	Net decrease in burden. The 1.41% increase in applicants is offset by the results of the simplification changes implemented by the Department. This has resulted in an overall decrease in burden of 11.57% or 3,397,545 hours.
Total Applicant Burden	29,357,853	25,959,853	-3,398,000	-11.6%	
Total Annual Responses	46,447,024	46,099,007	-348,017	-.75%	
Cost for All Applicants	\$234,804.24	\$190,224.76	\$44,579.48	-18.99%	

The Department takes pride in the continued efforts to simplify the FAFSA submission process and the continued decrease in burden associated with the application process, even as the Department serves more students each year. The results confirm the significant improvements that have been made to the application process. The Department believes that these changes will lead to more students completing the FAFSA and will assist more students with their pursuit of postsecondary education through access to Title IV, HEA program assistance.

Dated: November 5, 2012

Darrin A. King, Director
Information Collection Clearance Division
Privacy, Information and Records Management Services
Office of Management

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